

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCERS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church

and/or common Old St. Vincent's Catholic Church

2. Location

street & number 131 South Main Street

not for publication

city, town Cape Girardeau

vicinity of

congressional district #10-Hon. Bill Burlison

state Missouri

code 029

county Cape Girardeau

code 031

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name ~~Vincenbian Fathers of Western Province~~ (see continuation sheet)street & number ~~1000 Oak Avenue~~city, town ~~St. Louis~~

vicinity of

state ~~Missouri~~ 63108

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office, Cape Girardeau County Courthouse

street & number Courthouse Square

city, town Jackson

state Missouri 63755

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Missouri Historic Sites Catalogue has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ nodate 1963 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Missouri

city, town Columbia,

state Missouri 65201

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH

Continuation sheet

Item number 4

Page 1

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received

date entered

1. Bernard F. Law, Bishop of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, a Corporation Sole
Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau
200 McDaniel Building
Springfield, Missouri 65806

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH

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-
2. Missouri State Historical Survey
1979, 1980 state
Historic Preservation Program, P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101
-

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent

☒ good

☐ fair

☐ deteriorated

☐ ruins

☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered

☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site

☐ moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Church of St. Vincent de Paul, now known as Old St. Vincent's Church, is located in a residential neighborhood of Cape Girardeau, Missouri, two blocks south of the town's central business district. It is surrounded by buildings dating primarily to the period between 1850 and 1920.

The church, which measures approximately 129' from east to west and 67' from north to south, features a design scheme of three by seven bays and is constructed of red brick with sandstone trim, painted cream, on a foundation of sandstone. The building is capped by a gabled roof covered with asphalt shingles and is designed in the Gothic Revival style with several elements drawn from the English Perpendicular mode. These include, on the exterior, the vertically oriented perpendicular wooden mullions, the tall and slim window and vent openings, the flat walled western apse and the tower which was designed for the building but never built (photo #8). The present ogival dome which rests on the tower in the central bay of the primary facade is at least the third design scheme which has been proposed for this feature. The church was originally constructed without a central tower (photo #9). After 1880 but prior to 1905 a vestibule was added to the primary facade and a pyramidal steeple was constructed over the central bay (photo #10). This steeple was struck by lightning twice and finally destroyed in 1912. The base of the 1905 tower remained and the present cupola was constructed above in 1912. The exterior brick walls of the church were stuccoed in 1923 as part of a conservation effort. This stucco coating was removed by sandblasting in the remodeling of 1951-1953 and the resulting pock-marked surface was unskillfully repointed and treated with waterproofing containing red pigment. The present carved oak doors were added to the main entrance in 1926.

The interior to the church features clustered piers of unknown material, possibly wood, coated with plaster which support a hammer beam wooden ceiling. This ceiling exhibits plainly molded hammer beams and braces supporting open work trefoil medallions flanking Tudor arched collar braces. Above, a pediment with a central open work quatrefoil supports a gabled roof. To the west in the flat backed apse, a triple lancet window was covered inside and out at an unknown date with enamel paint to act as a backdrop for the large wooden crucifix which hangs there today. The color scheme of the interior features beige walls, rose beige trim and red carpeting.

All the windows and niches in the sanctuary and aisles are crowned with head molds which terminate in anthropomorphic label stops. The walls, column surfaces and all of the decorative effects within the church are executed in plaster. In the restoration of 1951-1953 all the plaster was removed from the interior and all details were removed, recast and replaced and the walls were replastered. At the same time all the glass in the windows was replaced, though the original wooden mullions were retained. In addition, the heating system was refurnished, modern wiring and lighting were installed and soundproofed confessionals were constructed at the east end of the building.

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ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH

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date entered

At the southwest and northwest extremes of the building other alterations are evident. Exterior arched doorways, which have been sealed with brick, originally opened onto very narrow spiral stairways leading to small second floor rooms over the sacristies. Only the stair to the south remains. These small rooms have grilled windows which overlook the main altar. It is believed that these spaces served as seating areas either for nuns of the nearby St. Vincent's Academy or for slaves of the original parishioners.

An examination of the exterior of this building reveals that all brick, sandstone and mortar is in an extremely friable condition and is deteriorating rapidly. Evidently, the waterproof coating given to the exterior in the 1950's has not been effective for many years. In addition, all wooden trim on doors and windows is peeling and needs repainting. Inside, watermarks on the ceiling indicate water damage in several areas, but a new roof is currently being installed.

Footnotes

1. Louis Houck, "City School System Gets Start in Church Basement", Southeast Missourian; May 7, 1969.
2. These features are not seen in the view of the church dated to 1880 but are seen in a 1905 view.
3. Information on alterations is taken from the draft National Register Inventory-Nomination Form by Miss Laura St. Ann Keller and from A History of St. Vincent's Church, Centennial Booklet, 1853-1953 (Cape Girardeau: St. Vincent's Church, 1953) and "Out of the Past", Southeast Missourian, December 2, 1950.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1853 Builder/Architect John Lansman - Builder
Thomas Waryng Walsh - Architect¹

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, now Old St. Vincent's Church, in Cape Girardeau, Missouri is significant as the unique local example of English Perpendicular Gothic Revival architecture. It was designed by the noted Missouri architect, Thomas Waryng Walsh, and has served as a center of religious activity in Cape Girardeau for over a century.

Thomas Waryng Walsh was born in Kilkenny, Ireland in 1827. He was educated at Trinity College in Dublin and he followed his father's profession of architect after apprenticing under Sir William Dean Butler. Walsh arrived in St. Louis in 1849 and soon secured many fine commissions which established him as an architect of note. These included the Second Empire Four Courts Building and the English Gothic Revival St. Francis Xavier Church and St. Louis University Campus Buildings, all in St. Louis, Missouri.²

The story of the Catholic faith in Cape Girardeau began in 1821 when priests began to make periodic visits to settlers in the area. By 1833 the church had secured the land where Old St. Vincent's stands today and by 1836 the town had its first resident priest, Reverend John Odin. By April, 1838, the cornerstone for the church building was laid on the site by Bishop Rosati of St. Louis. Though this first church was of substantial stone construction, it was destroyed by a tornado in 1850. The present church was constructed over the foundations of the old in 1853.³

Worship at this church has continued uninterrupted from 1853 to the present. On December 1, 1977 the status of this church was changed from a parish church to that of a chapel of ease of the Parish of St. Mary's Cathedral due to the construction of a new Church of St. Vincent de Paul and the organization of its new parish. In addition, the name of the building was changed to Old St. Vincent's Church at this time to distinguish it from the new church. With this change the administration of the old building was passed to the Pastor of St. Mary's Cathedral Parish with legal title retained by the Vincentian Fathers. By a joint decision of the Bishop of the Springfield-Cape Girardeau Diocese and the Superior of the Vincentian Fathers the cost of ordinary maintenance of the building is borne by those members of St. Mary's Cathedral Parish who chose to make Old St. Vincent's their regular place of worship. The people are also responsible for generating funds for the renovation and the preservation of the building since no funds from the parish, the Vincentian Fathers or the Diocese are provided.

At present the building serves as a place of religious services on Sunday mornings, and it is occasionally the location of other religiously oriented community events such as choral concerts presented by the local Southeast Missouri State University Department of Music.⁴

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Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Page 1

Footnotes

1. Thomas Waryng Walsh has been designated as architect based on a statement by Louis Houck in "City School System Gets Started in Church Basement", Southeast Missourian, May 7, 1969 and on stylistic grounds through comparison Walsh's known designs.
2. John Albury Bryan, Missouri's Contribution to American Architecture, (St. Louis: St. Louis Chapter-American Institute of Architects, 1928), p. 51 and William Hyde and Howard Conard, Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis (New York: Southern Historical Co., 1899), pp. 2399-2400. For illustrations of Walsh's buildings see George McCue, The Building Art in St. Louis (St. Louis: St. Louis Chapter-American Institute of Architects, 1967), p. 49 and Bryan, pp. 57, 79.
3. A History of St. Vincent's Church, Centennial Booklet, 1853-1953 (Cape Girardeau: St. Vincent's Church, 1953), p. 3.
4. "Old St. Vincent's Setting for Handel's 'Te Deum'", Southeast Missourian, April 9, 1978.

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. A History of St. Vincent's Church, Centennial Booklet, 1853-1953.
Cape Girardeau: St. Vincent's Church, 1953.
2. Bryan, John Albury. Missouri's Contribution to American Architecture.
St. Louis: St. Louis Chapter-American Institute of Architects, 1928.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1.20

Quadrangle name Cape Girardeau, MO-ILL

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	5	2	7	6	6	8	0	4	1	3	1	0	1	0
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Zone Easting Northing

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E

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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F

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification All that part of lot 2, 3, 17 and 18 in Range "A" in the City of Cape Girardeau more particularly described as follows: Commence at the South-west corner of lot 18 Range "A" and run thence east along the North line of Williams Street 214 feet to the West line of the extension of Main Street; thence North with the West line

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title 1. Noelle Soren, Architectural Historian

organization Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program

date October 24, 1980

street & number P.O. Box 176 telephone 314:751-4096

city or town Jefferson City, state Missouri 65102

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



State Historic Preservation Officer and

title Director, Department of Natural Resources

date 22 Feb 82

For HCERS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Continuation sheet

Item number 9

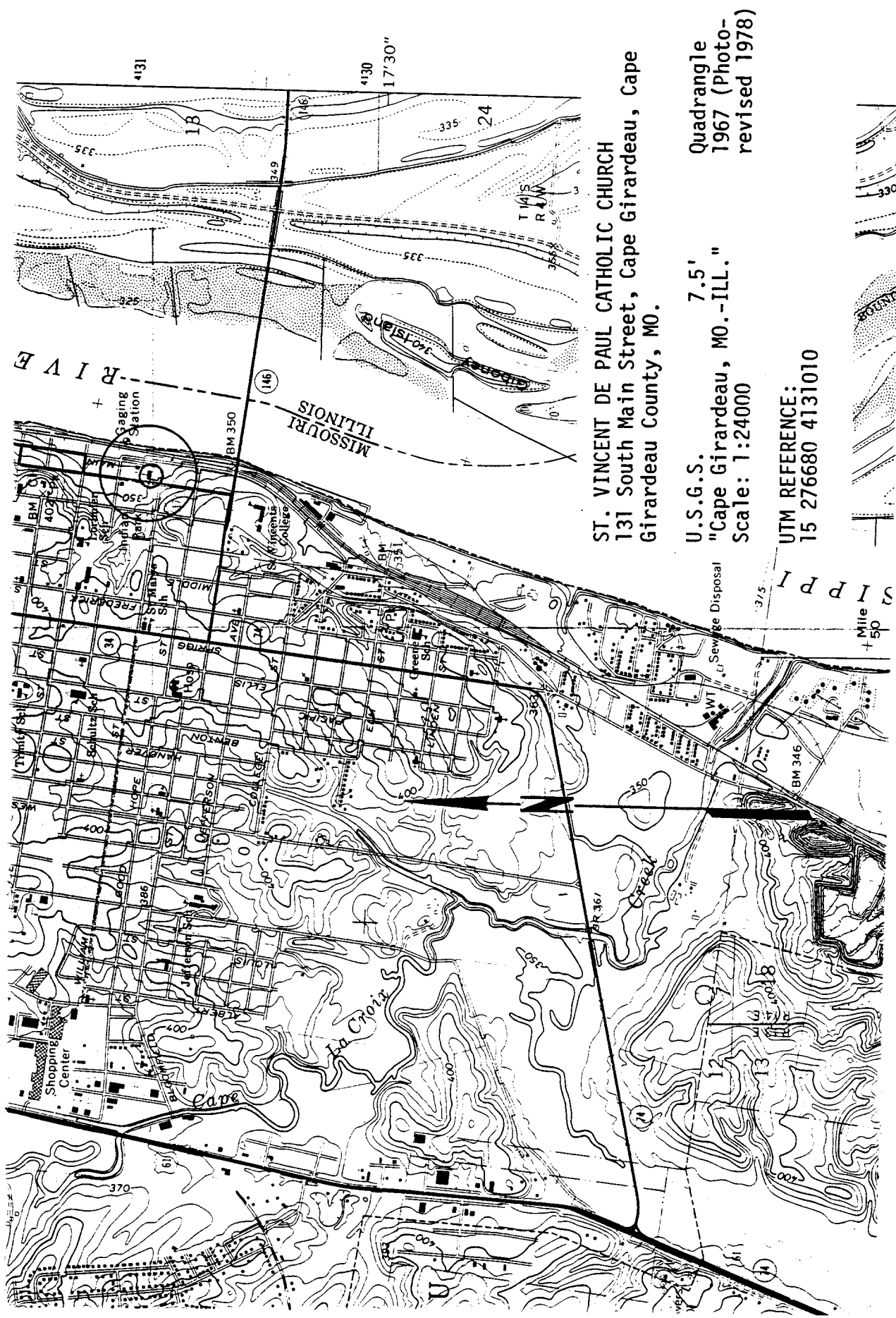
Page 1

3. Houck, Louis. "City School System Gets Start in Church Basement", Southeast Missourian, May 7, 1969.
4. Hyde, William and Conard, Howard. Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis. New York: Southern Historical Co., 1899.
5. "Old St. Vincent's Setting for Handel's 'Te Deum'", Southeast Missourian, April 9, 1978.
6. McCue, George. The Building Art in St. Louis. St. Louis: St. Louis Chapter-American Institute of Architects, 1969.

Item Number 11

Page 1

2. Miss Laura St. Ann Keller
Old St. Vincent's Catholic Church
Westlane, East Rodney Drive 314:334-5784
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701
3. James Denny, Chief Nominations and Survey
Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
P.O. Box 176 314:751-4096
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH
131 South Main Street, Cape Girardeau, Cape
Girardeau County, MO.

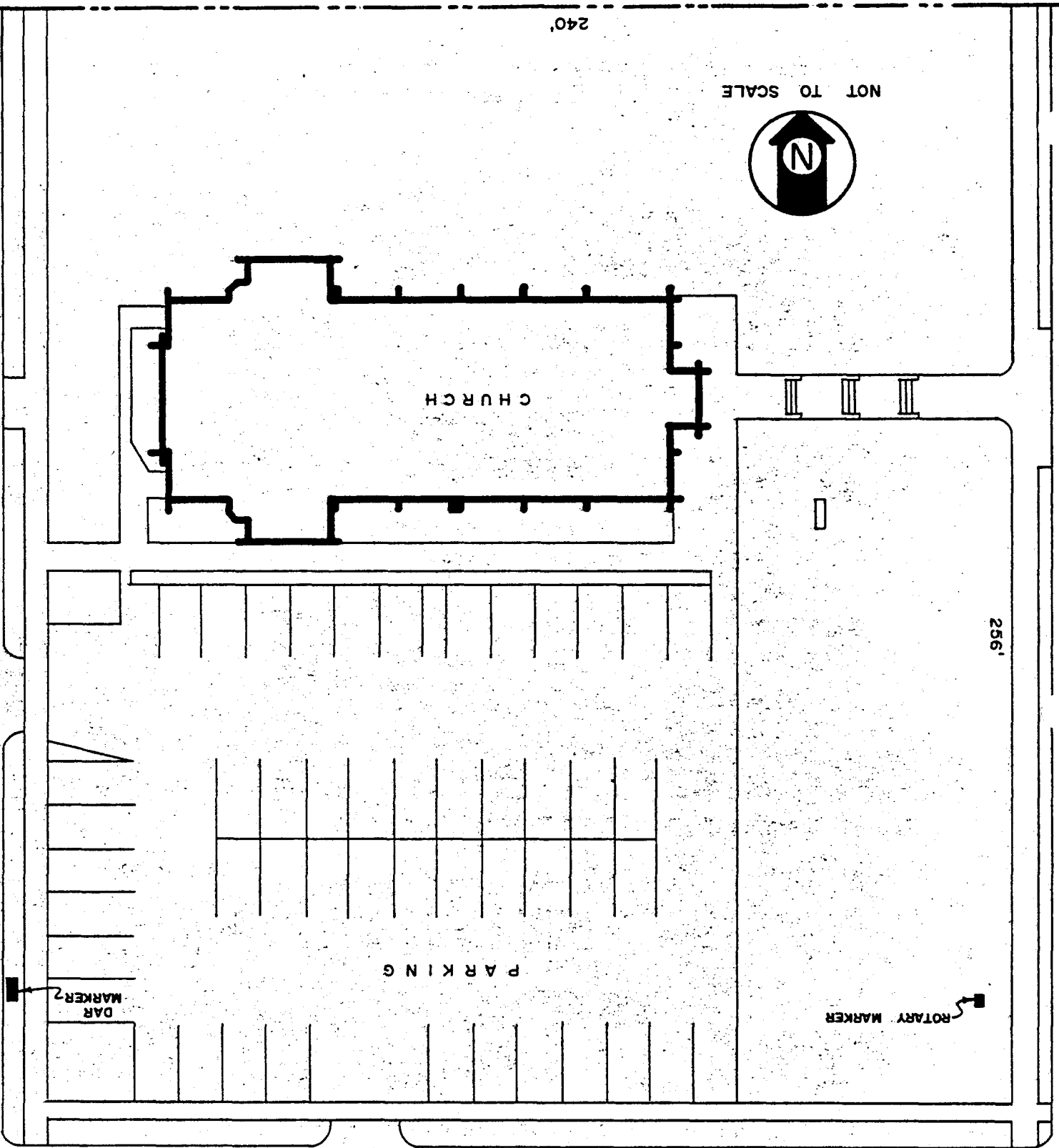
U.S.G.S. 7.5' 1:24000
"Cape Girardeau, MO.-ILL."
Scale: 1:24000

UTM REFERENCE:
15 276680 4131010



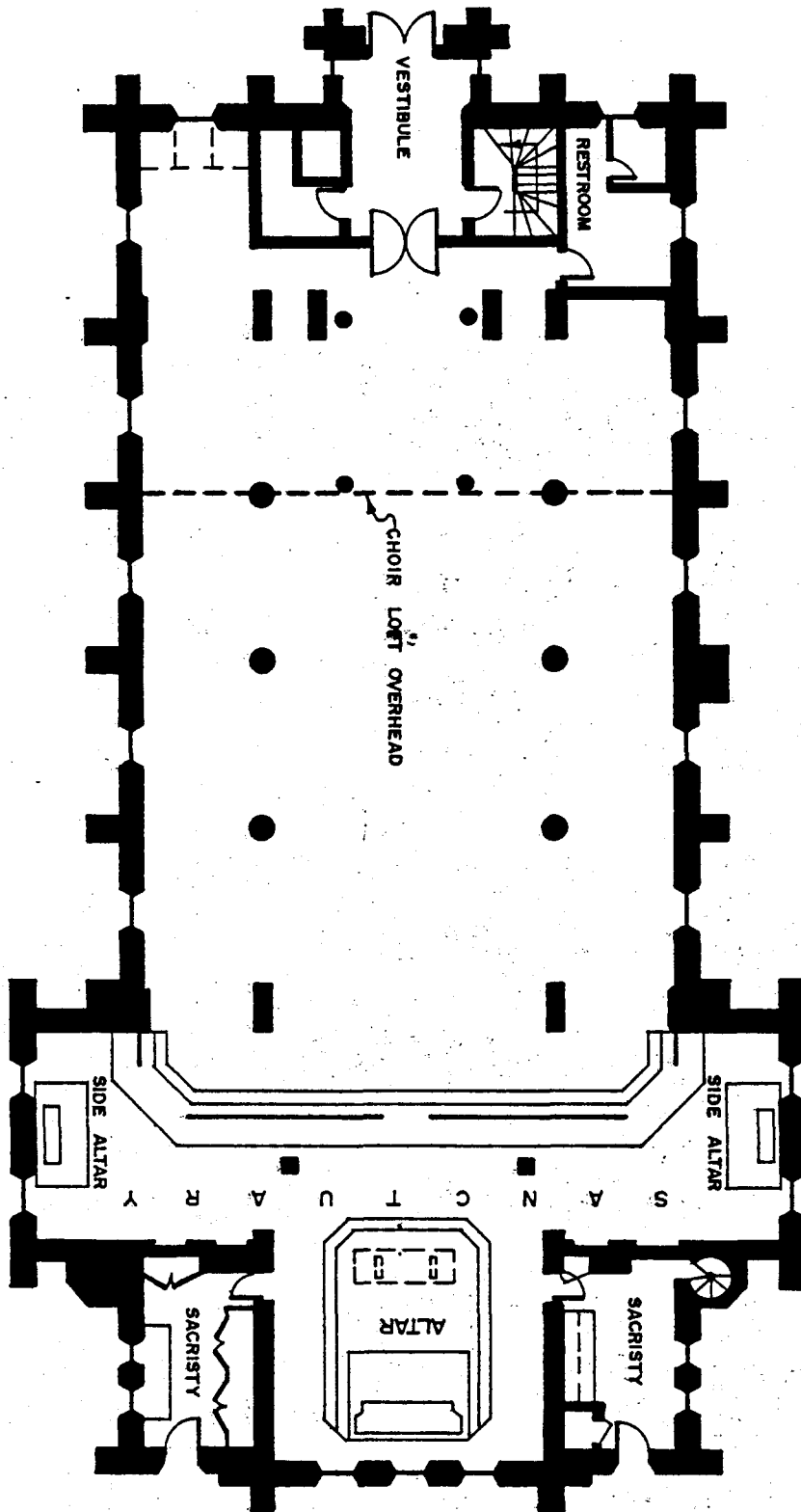
SITE PLAN MAP SAINT VINCENT'S CATHOLIC CHURCH CAPE GIRARDEAU, MISSOURI

W I L L I A M S

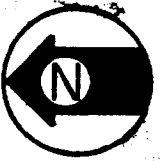


M A I N

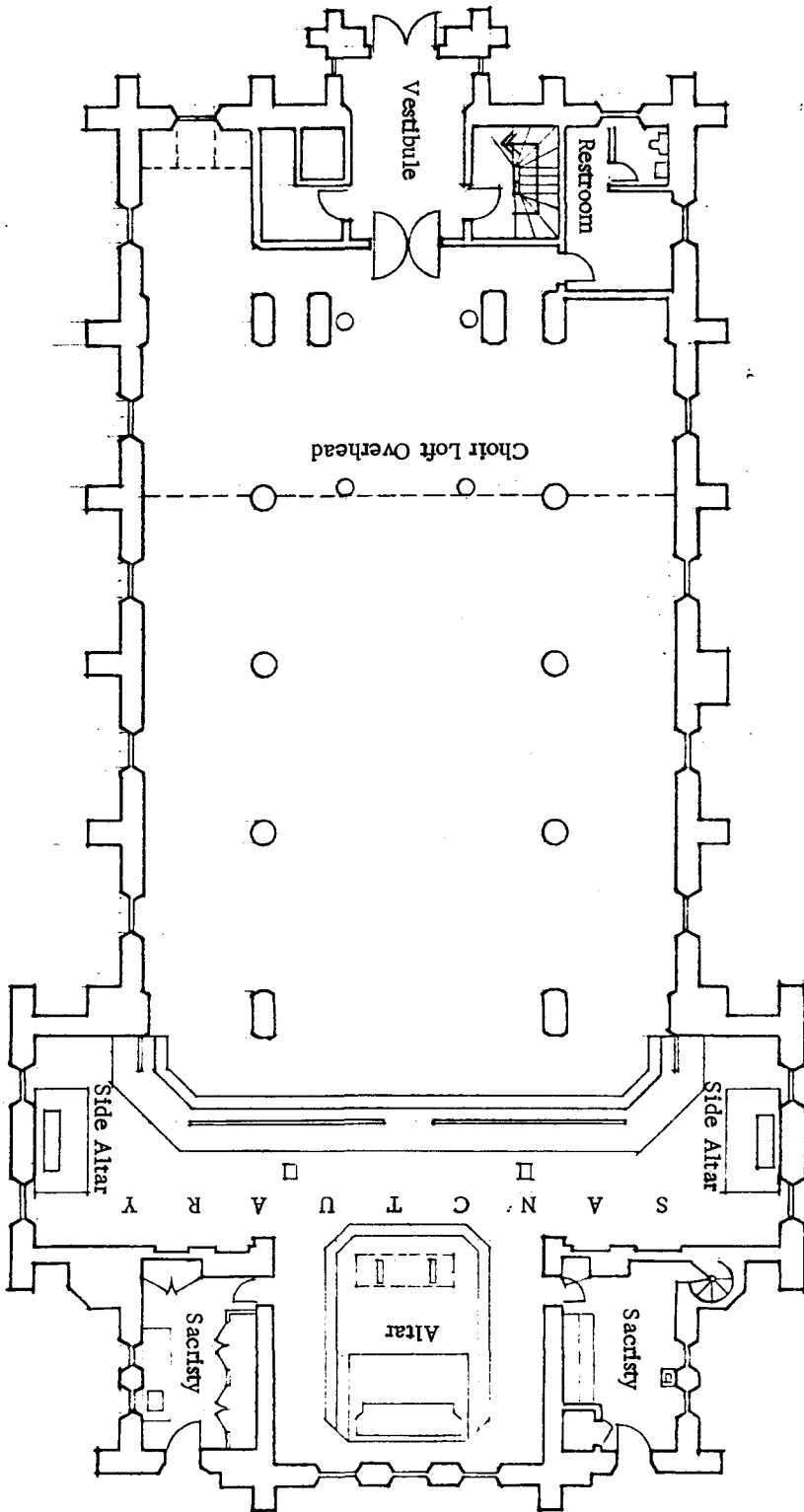
FLOOR PLAN SAINT VINCENT'S CATHOLIC CHURCH CAPE GIRARDEAU, MISSOURI



NOT TO SCALE



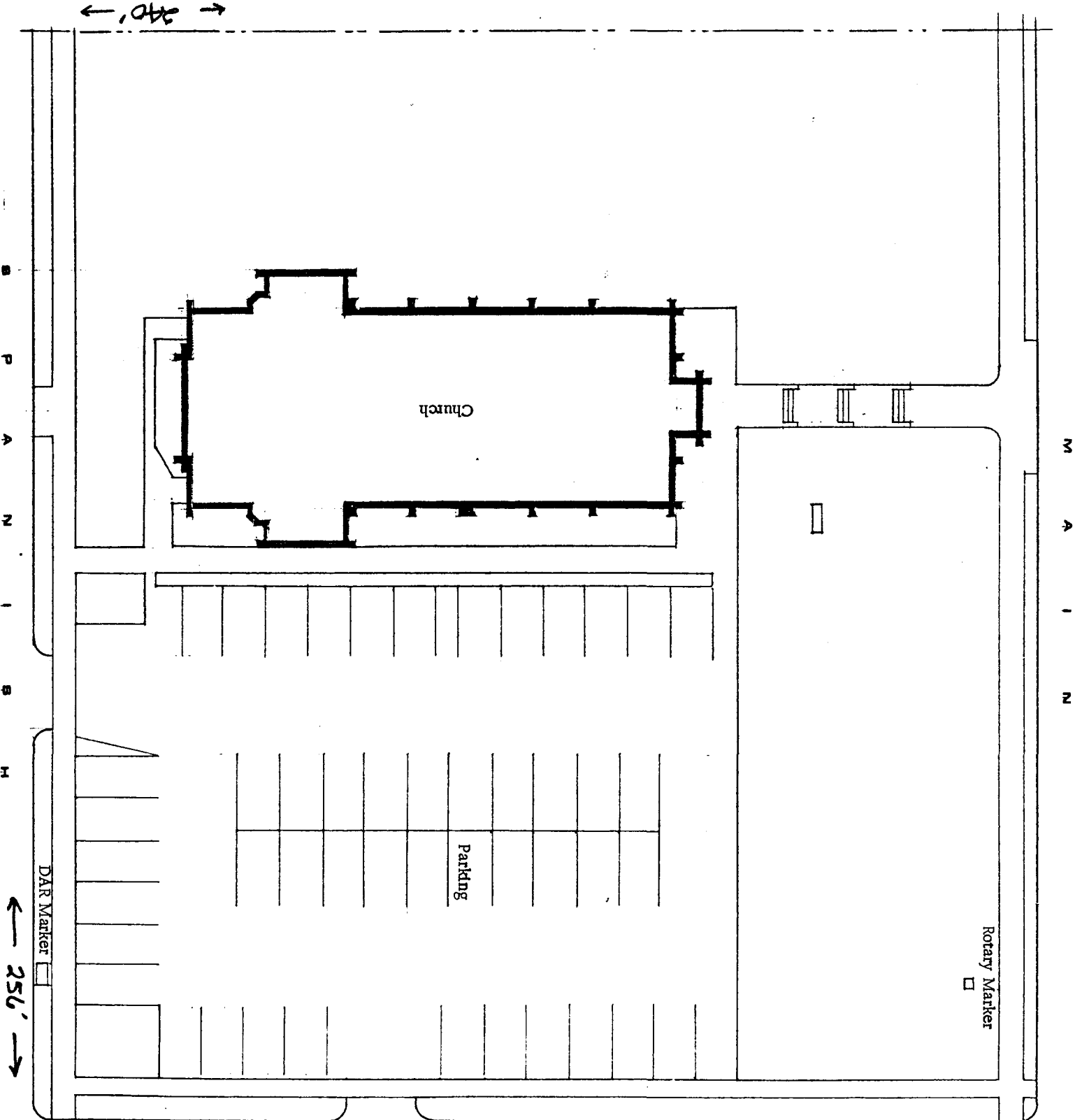
FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"
NORTH





SITE PLAN

SCALE: 1/32" = 1'-0"



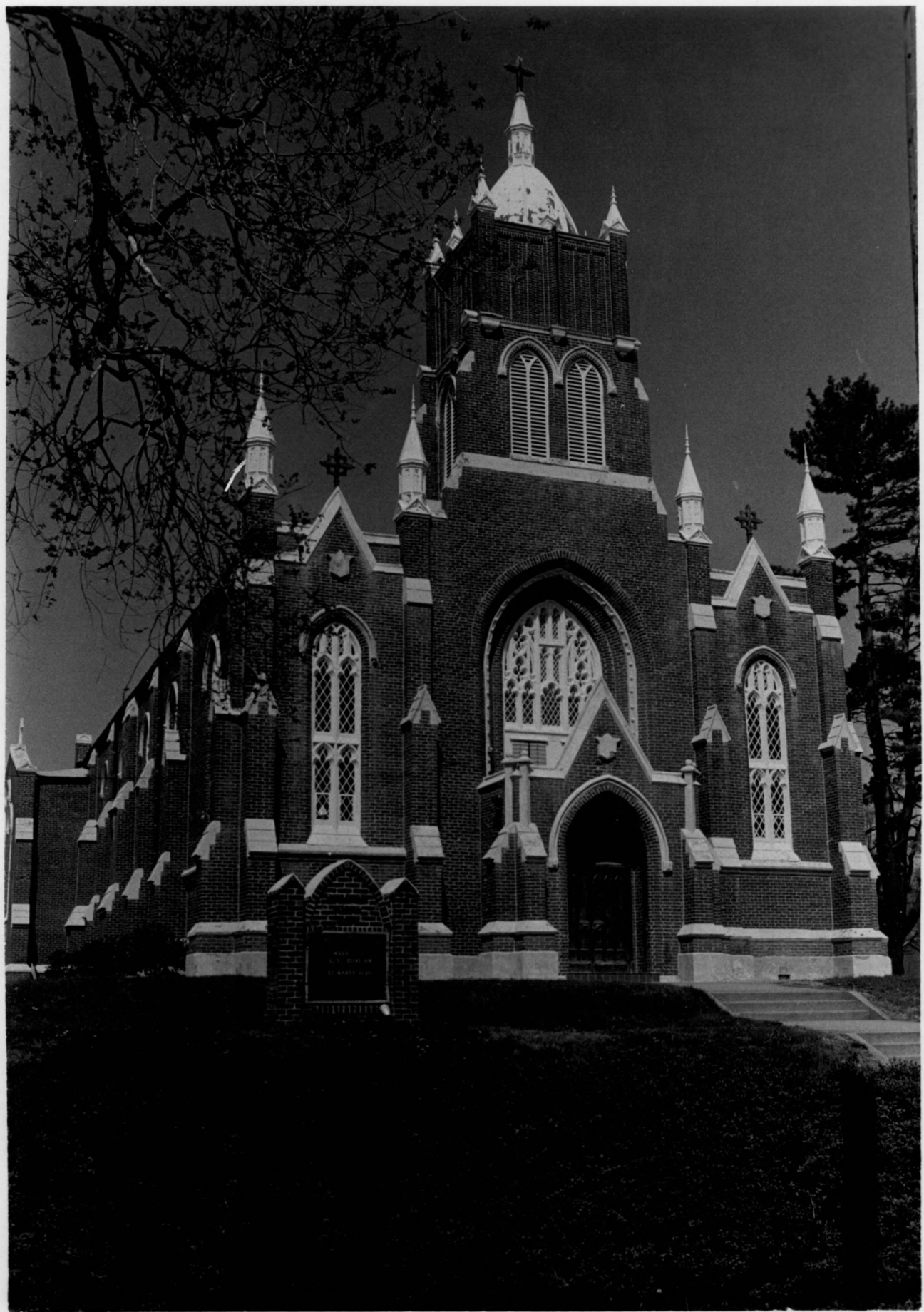
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH #1 of 10
131 S. Main, Cape Girardeau, Cape Girardeau
County. MO.

Photographer: Gordon McBride
June, 1979

Neg. Loc.: 625 Belleview, Cape Girardeau, MO.
63701

Primary (east) facade.

NR 2C



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH #2 of 10
131 S. Main, Cape Girardeau, Cape Girardeau
County, MO.

Photographer: Jim Denny
September, 1980

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,
Jefferson City, MO. 65101

Primary (east) facade, detail, main entryway.
Note the especially deteriorated condition of
the brick



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH #3 of 10
131 S. Main, Cape Girardeau, Cape Girardeau
County, MO.

Photographer: Jim Denny

September, 1980

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,
Jefferson City, MO. 65101
South side.



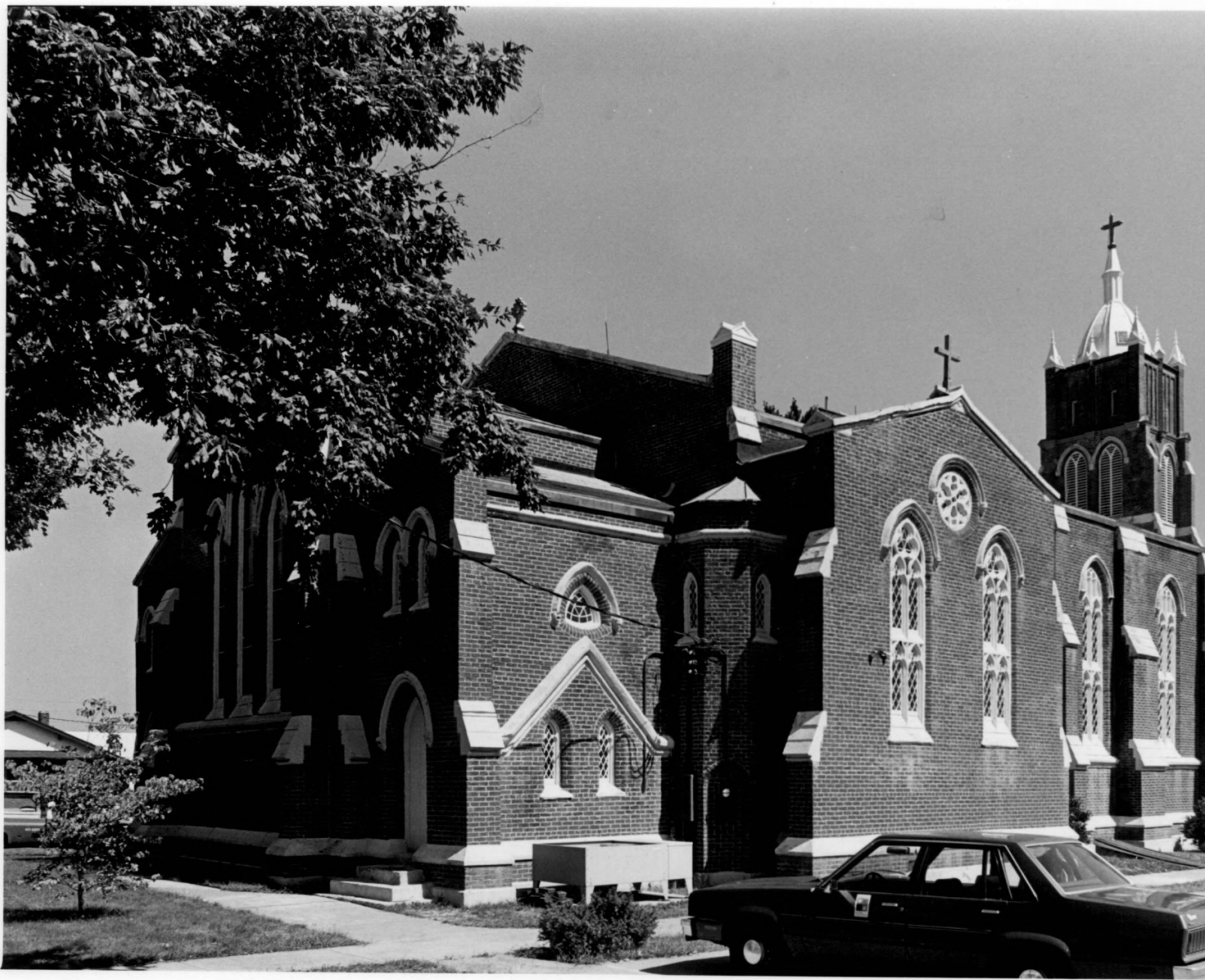
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH #4 of 10
131 S. Main, Cape Girardeau, Cape Girardeau
County, MO.

Photographer: Jim Denny

September, 1980

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,
Jefferson City, MO. 65101

View to northeast of southwest corner. Note
entryway which has been closed in the small
tower in the corner.



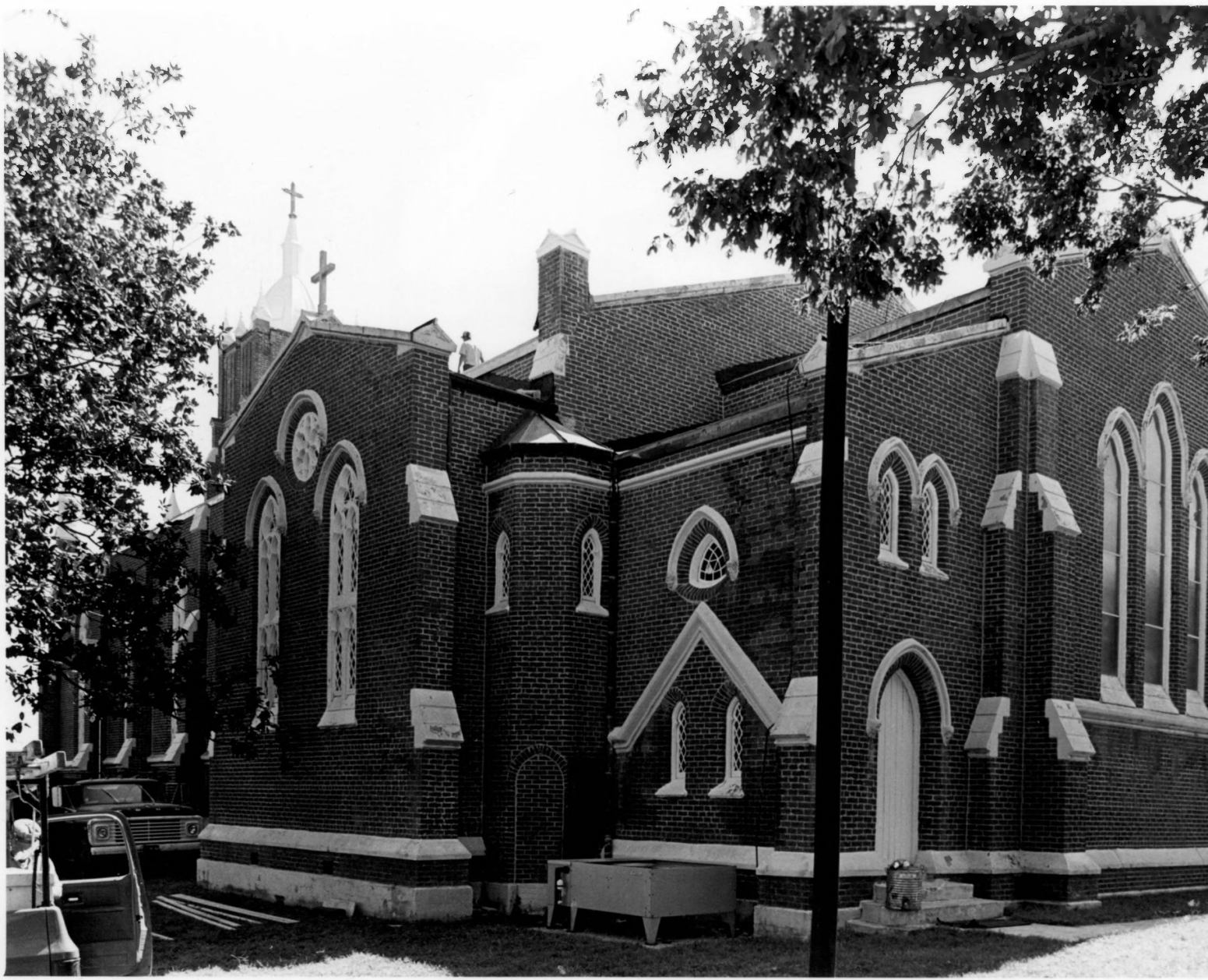
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH #5 of 10
131 S. Main, Cape Girardeau, Cape Girardeau
County, MO.

Photographer: Jim Denny

September, 1980

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,
Jefferson City, MO. 65101

View to southeast of northwest corner and west
side.



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH #6 of 10
131 S. Main, Cape Girardeau, Cape Girardeau
County, MO.

Photographer: Gordon McBride
June, 1979

Neg. Loc.: 625 Belleview, Cape Girardeau, MO.
63701

Interior, view to east.



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH #7 of 10
131 S. Main, Cape Girardeau, Cape Girardeau
County, MO.

Photographer: Jim Denny
September, 1980

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,
Jefferson City, MO. 65101

Interior, view to west.



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH #8 of 10
131 S. Main, Cape Girardeau, Cape Girardeau
County, MO.

Photographer: Lueders Studio
February, 1980

"Capital View of Cape Girardeau", engraving
by A. Bottger showing in two views the intent
of the architect in the design of the steeple.
Date ca. 1860.

LUEDERS STUDIO ©

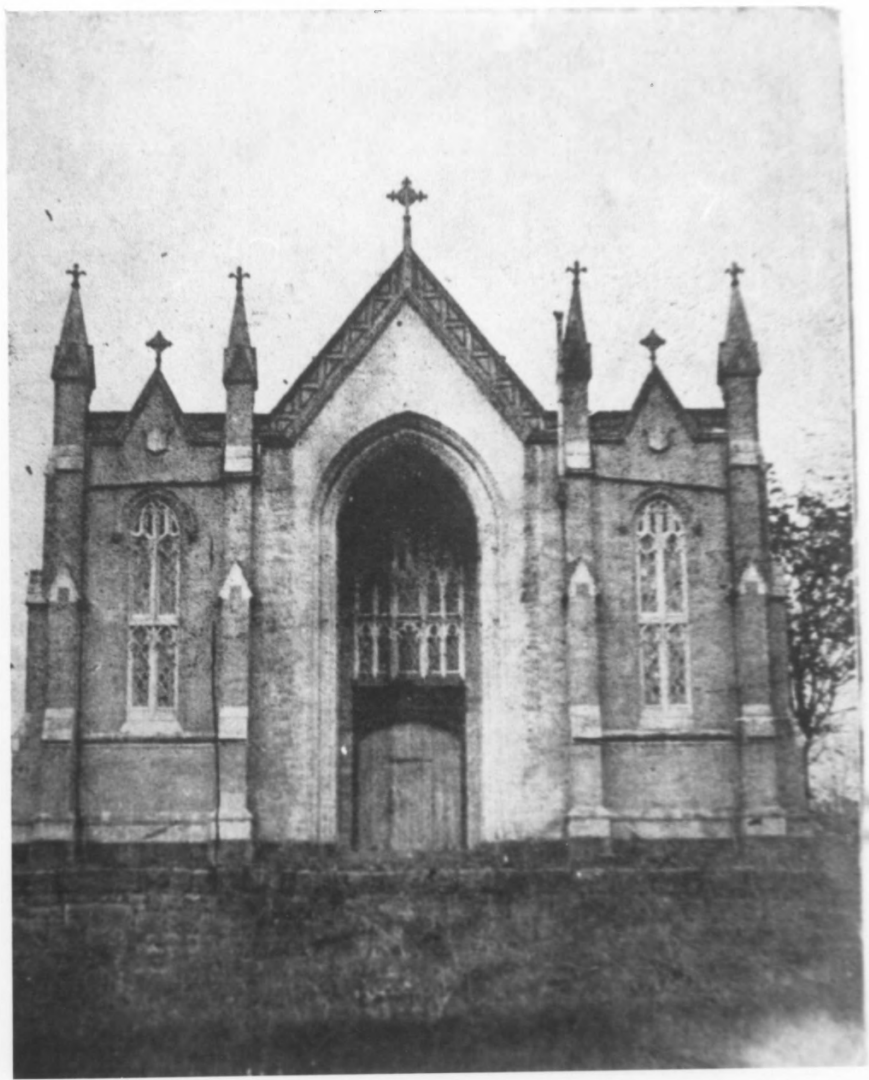
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH #9 of 10
131 S. Main, Cape Girardeau, Cape Girardeau
County, MO.

Photographer: Unknown

Prior to 1905

Neg. Loc.: H. Riley Bock, New Madrid, MO.
63869

Primary (east) facade as originally constructed
without tower and vestibule.

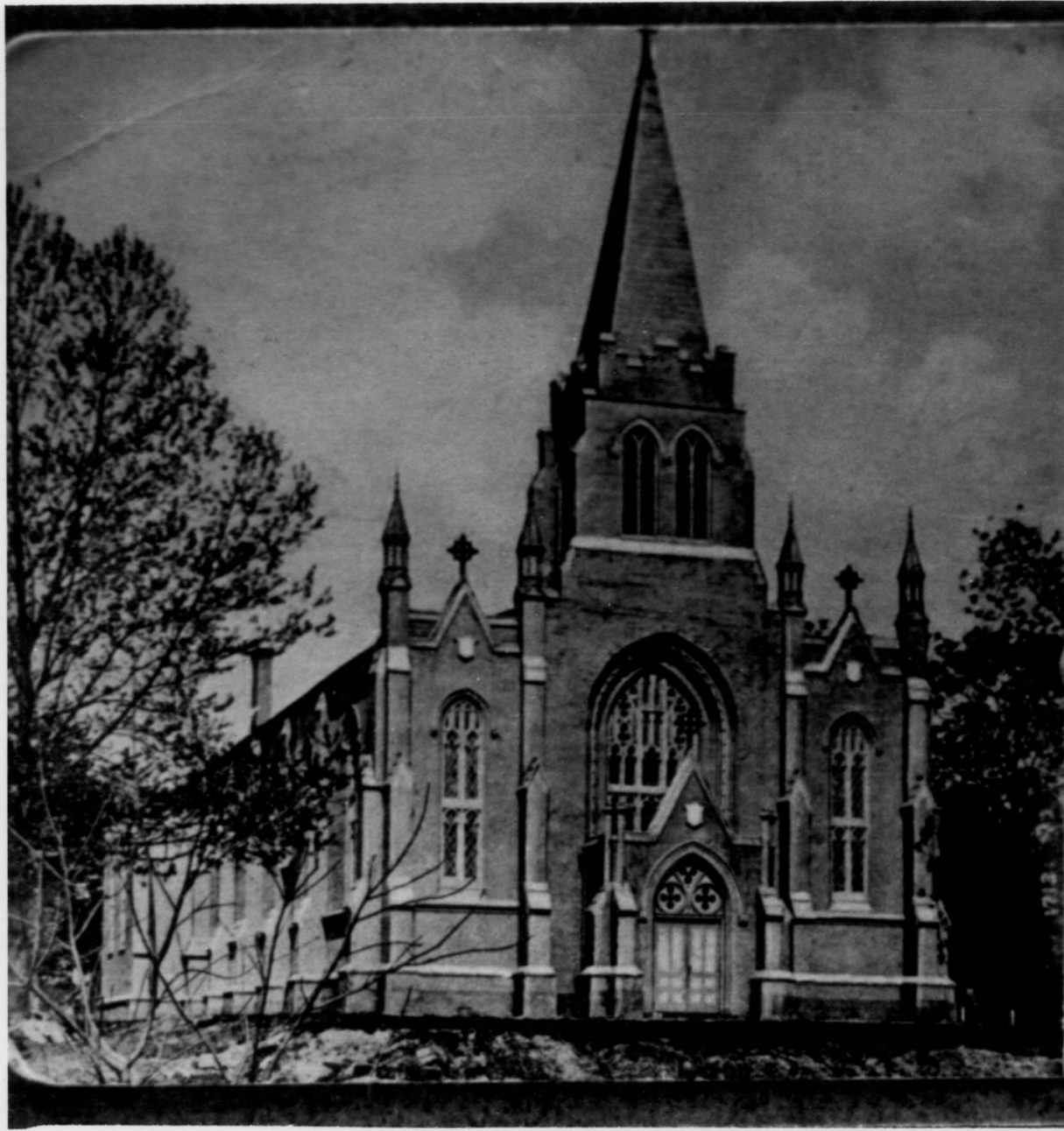


ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH #10 of 10
131 S. Main, Cape Girardeau, Cape Girardeau
County, MO.

Photographer: Southeast Missouri Drummers
Magazine
1905

Neg. Loc.: Gordon McBride, 625 Belleview,
Cape Girardeau, MO. 63701

Primary (east) facade with steeple which was
destroyed in 1912.



St. Vincent's Catholic Church, Cape Girardeau, Mo.

*Wish you could go to church with
me this morning!
If nothing happens I'll
w w*

EXTRA
PHOTOS









